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United for Quality Care

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Angel Bailey, PCA
Ansonia
District 1199 New England
Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Angel Bailey and I am a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) living in Ansonia. I'm here to ask you to fully fund home care services, so that PCAs like me can finally earn a living wage and receive quality benefits.

I have worked as a PCA for five years and I love the work I do. As a PCA I cook, clean, help my consumer get dressed, do their hair, take them out shopping or to doctors appointments, and other tasks to care for them. The work I do as a PCA, allows my consumers to enjoy the same comforts as you and me. I am a lifeline for my consumers, but as a PCA I also need this work to be a lifeline for me.

The low wages and complete lack of benefits are unacceptable. I have to keep an incredibly tight budget just to make ends meet and save nothing. I am really struggling. I also have to limit my hours to 25 per week so that I won't lose my Husky health insurance. It is wrong that we were called essential during the pandemic but we are forced to cap our income just to keep our health insurance. With my asthma and other chronic conditions, I can't afford to be uninsured.

We also have no paid sick leave. In December I caught COVID and was out of work for over 2 weeks and lost $600 in income. I had to borrow money from my adult son to pay rent. Are these the kind of problems that we as essential workers should be facing?

In addition to poverty wages, no health insurance, and no paid sick leave, we also do not have a pension or retirement plan offered through our job. How are we supposed to save for our future or do PCAs not deserve to retire? I do not want to work until I die, but without better wages and benefits, I worry that I will be forced to leave this field I love.

Please do what is right by PCAs and our consumers by allocating the funding necessary to provide PCAs with living wages and quality benefits.

Thank you for your time.